

Exhibit A



**LAWYERS' COMMITTEE FOR
CIVIL RIGHTS
UNDER LAW**

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October 11, 2016

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Executive Director

Kristen Clarke

Dear Attorney General Olens and Mr. Germany:

We know how hard everyone in local and state government in Georgia is working in the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew. We are keeping the people of Georgia in our thoughts today, and we wish everyone the best in this difficult time.

We write to express our concern that Hurricane Matthew has impeded the ability of Chatham County residents to register to vote. (We are not sending this letter directly to Secretary of State Brian Kemp due to pending litigation in connection with a different matter.) The problems facing Chatham County voters are particularly unfortunate because voter registration in Georgia ends today. The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law fears that otherwise eligible voters in Chatham County have not been able to submit their voter registration applications in a timely manner due to closures and evacuation orders caused by Hurricane Matthew.

Several critical days in the registration period have already been lost, as all government offices in Chatham County were closed at the end of last week. The Chatham County elections office is closed today. It was last open on Wednesday, October 5. It is our understanding that post offices in Chatham County were closed late last week and that some of the post offices that opened today had no power or phone service. Access to and from the barrier islands, including Tybee Island, remains difficult if not impossible.

We appreciate that Secretary Kemp encouraged residents in the path of Hurricane Matthew to take advantage of the state's online and mobile voter access points. Although applicants who already have a Georgia driver's license or state ID card may register to vote online, this technology may not be readily available to residents of Chatham County, which had been under an evacuation order until last Sunday and a state of emergency since last week. Online registration is also not available to applicants who lack a Georgia driver's license or state ID card, including persons who have recently moved to Georgia, senior citizens, students and others.

The right to vote is fundamental and must be protected, especially in the aftermath of a state of emergency. The right of eligible Georgians to vote should not be usurped by a natural disaster. In these extraordinary circumstances, we recommend that measures be



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taken to ensure that all eligible residents of Chatham County who seek to register have their applications processed. Given that Georgia is under a state of emergency, we suggest that Secretary of State Kemp extend the registration deadline in Chatham County by the same number of days that government offices have been closed due to the storm. Given the large minority population percentage in the county (Black alone: 40.2%; Latino alone: 6.2%),¹ we are concerned that failing to modify the deadline will deny minority voters an equal opportunity to participate in the electoral process.

Given that voter registration concludes today, **we request a response by no later than 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 12** so we can discuss ways to ensure that residents of Chatham County do not lose the opportunity to register to vote. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kristen Clarke
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¹ U.S. Census Bureau's "Quick Facts" of 2015 Population Estimates for Chatham County.